

Sept. 4, 2019

IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO PREPARE FOR THE REST OF THE 2019 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON

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While it appears that the Tampa Bay area will not experience the worst that Hurricane Dorian has to bring, it is still an important time to remind Tampa Bay area residents that we are just entering the busiest period of the hurricane season. On average, more than 40% of all Atlantic tropical storms and hurricanes form during the month of September, and Florida is the state most vulnerable to storm impacts. If you have not yet made preparations for the potential impact of a storm, now is an outstanding time to do so, and if you did buy supplies for Hurricane Dorian, it is a wise idea to hold onto those until after the season ends on Dec. 1.

Some key preparedness messages from the Tampa Bay area county health departments include:

- Have a disaster preparedness kit – including prescription medications – for every member of your family. Be sure to include phone numbers for doctor offices and emergency contacts in that information as well.
- If you or a family member needs to register for special needs evacuation or shelter assistance, please contact your county's emergency management office to do so immediately. Please note that special needs shelter policies can vary from county to county. Call or visit your county's emergency management office to confirm issues such as accepting pets, the provision of meals, etc. Please remember that when a storm is approaching, most counties stop online registrations 48 hours before the anticipated arrival of tropical storm force winds. Please register now, before the next storm threatens.
- If you or a family member needs more advanced medical care than can be provided at a special needs shelter, please contact your doctor to make special arrangements in advance of the arrival of a storm.

While we can hope for the best when it comes to hurricanes in the state of Florida, it makes sense to be prepared for the worst. For information on how to develop a survival plan, please visit the Florida Division of Emergency Management's website at <https://apps.floridadisaster.org/getaplan/>, or connect to your home county's emergency management office from <https://floridadisaster.org/counties/>.

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